1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34

471 556 Ownership of livestock similarly poses questions. The wealthy man who keeps a considerable number of bulls whose main use seems to be to enhance his social prestige by having the bulls selected for riding at a fiesta may also sell them for beef if he needs money for productive enterprises. Sheep are capital in much the same sense that land is capital. A yoke of oxen or a burro may be used to aid production and are also rented. A horse, on the other hand, is close to a "conspicuous expenditure."

471 [313] [474] Probably the minimal capital required in Cherán is for the production of certain services. A water carrier needs only two 25-liter oil cans, a bit of rope, and a piece of wood to make a yoke. A *tabla* maker (one producing heavy hewn planks or beams) needs only an ax and some oak wedges he cuts out himself, and 10 pesos to join the cooperative (formerly he would have needed only enough to pay the tax for use of communal lands). A digging stick and a knife would suffice to gather *raiz de paja*, while herbs need only a bit of cloth to tie them in. At the other extreme are the owners of threshing machines, *nixtamal* mills, or trucks, the latter requiring a cash outlay of between 8 and 10 thousand pesos.

For the farmer, aside from land, very few capital goods are necessary. Ox teams and plows may be rented and paid for out of the crop; even land may be secured on a sharecrop basis. A special *machete* for weeding is, in fact, the only indispensable tool. Such farming, however, will bring a relatively small return, probably little, if any, more than could be earned by a hired laborer.

At the other extreme, a landowner, farming his own land, should own an ox team, yoke, plow, *machete*, burros, and nets for transporting the crop, adequate storage facilities, and sufficient cash to hire labor at crucial periods such as planting and harvesting. A man so situated will reap the best possible return from his labor.

The major investment of a farmer is in land, storage facilities, and livestock. His ox yoke and plow he may make himself, and the few metal tools needed are not costly. In general, the investment in tools and equipment is much less than that required in manufacturing or some service occupations. A sewing machine

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632 district commander to arrest all strangers and
625 send them to Uruapan. So far as I could learn, nothing was done.

Representative of the people.—The represent-
632 ative of the people or *representante* is named by the people at a town meeting along with two other persons, forming an administrative committee. The representative is the *presidente* of the committee, another is a secretary, and the third is an ordinary member or *vocal*. The appointments are confirmed by the Governor and last until the people elect new ones at another *junta* or town meeting. None of the members receives any pay but the work is not onerous. Usually signing a few papers is the major duty. The reward, according to one member of the committee, is in being selected as one of the best "elements" in the town.

632 The collection of funds for use of the forest
651 lands is done by the inevitable *comisionado* system. With the approval and, if necessary, the backing of the mayor and *ayuntamiento*, the committee names the *comisionados* who collect 28 centavos from each householder every 2 months for the right to cut firewood on public lands. This money is used to pay the Federal taxes.

632 At present no one is supposed to cut wood
313 for lumber, charcoal, posts, etc., without securing a permit from the forestry service. (As
● [474] indicated elsewhere, efforts were being made to concentrate all activity in the hands of a cooperative. The description here is of conditions before organization of the cooperative.) To prevent unauthorized exploitation of the forests by Cherán residents, or poaching by persons from other towns, a forester is employed to patrol the woods. The source of pay of the forester is obscure, but he is entitled to make use of a certain amount of fallen timber on his own account and if he encounters poachers from other towns (such as Zacapu, Carapan, and Purépero), he may either confiscate their products and sell them or charge the poachers 20 or 25 centavos for each burro load. The proceeds are kept by the forester.

632 The institution of the *representante* is reasonably old; at least it has been in existence as long as men now living. While the representative apparently has no official responsibility, if things go wrong he is blamed. In 1939, a

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665 tion. It was, indeed, difficult to imagine him as the leader of a bloody riot.

159 As a final footnote on the affair of the "agrarians," one of the first acts of the new government installed in January, 1941, was to send letters to all the members of the agrarian group, inviting them to return to Cherán and guaranteeing their safety if they refrained from political activities. This was done with the approval, if not at the actual instigation, of Valenzuela.

474 An entirely different type of organization is the cooperative. Essentially an economic organization, it deserves treatment here because it potentially might yet have important political repercussions. Although not openly opposed [578] by anyone in hearing of the staff of the study, comments made by several men while drunk implied great bitterness on the part of some of the people in the town. The cooperative, still 474 in process of formation in 1941, was organized under the leadership of one Valentin Velás- 159 quez. Velásquez was not dressed in typical Cherán fashion, and he had spent several years in the United States. He speaks typically [195] Cherán Spanish, however, somewhat in the manner of the famous screen comedian, Cantinflas—he never finishes a sentence and only after several sentences is it apparent what his ideas really are. He is an orphan who has bettered himself economically at the cost of terrific effort, according to his own story, and his interest in the cooperative, he claims, is merely that of a good citizen who feels it his duty to aid others to better their lot. By his own admission there is a good deal of opposition to the cooperative, and he has been threatened with death several times. He lays this opposition to ignorance.

474 The organization of the cooperative would give it a monopoly on all exploitation of forest 313 lands except for cutting of firewood for personal use. The cooperative would charge a membership fee of 10 pesos, and members would be required to market all their products through the cooperative. Only the cooperative would be licensed by the Forestry Department and all work would have to be done in areas designated by the Forestry officials, using care not to destroy young trees. Members would receive better prices for their products through

474 313 the bulk marketing and better bargaining power of the cooperative. In 1941 it was claimed that a considerable number of the individuals working in the woods had signed up, as well as some men in the town who wished to indicate their support of the idea although not themselves forest workers.

474 Two things were said to be holding up the completion of the organization of the cooperative. The first was the necessity of raising enough capital to pay advances to the members when they deposited their products with the cooperative for marketing. The second was the refusal of the *representante* to sign the necessary papers. According to Velásquez, this refusal was not because the *representante* disapproved of the idea, but because he felt many people in town were opposed and he did not wish to sign the papers counter to their wishes. As the signature of the *representante* was not absolutely essential, the organization probably was completed without his approval.

It may be noted that the cooperative had nearly come to grief in its early days through an action by the *presidente militar* imposed after the 1937 *zafarrancho*. The military governor had ordered posts cut for the installation of the electric lighting system without securing a permit from the Department of Forestry. The Forestry officials had blamed [687] this on the cooperative, levied a thousand peso fine, and threatened to revoke the permit of the organization. This had been cleared up, and it was rumored that the former military governor was going to have to pay the fine—which may very much be doubted.

575 794 518 668 A number of other organizations of a religious nature exist and will be dealt with later. Potentially most influential in political matters are the church societies such as those of the Sacred Heart, the Third Order of Saint Francis, and others. In Cherán in 1940, it was difficult to learn much about these. The meetings were private, and secrecy had been impressed on the members. There is very little doubt that a new priest who took over the parish late in 1940 was utilizing these organizations to undermine the existing liberal political order in Cherán. Trouble was brewing in Cherán on the religious and political front and there is little doubt that it was being con-

BUILDING MATERIALS
AND THEIR SOURCES

WOOD

313 All wooden materials used in Cherán are pro-
656 duced from local timber. The forests stand al-
[423] most entirely on public lands considered to belong to the town. Formerly, exploitation of any sort was open to all residents who had paid a small fee to an administrative committee. The fee was used to pay federal taxes on the land. Recently, the Department of Forestry of the Federal Government has restricted exploitation of the forests for any purpose other than the collection of firewood to persons having permits. In Cherán this
[474] apparently will mean that persons wishing to cut lumber or shakes (or make charcoal) must join a local cooperative, for the Department of Forestry has refused to give permits to any other group or to individuals.

313 In general, the cutting of lumber is done by
335 specialists. Men who have no land or inadequate land or, in some cases, men who prefer the activity, cut most of the timber and shape it into planks and beams. Shake making is even more specialized, and men who make shakes may do nothing else except look after whatever farm lands they may own. Only a very poor person would attempt to cut the planks and beams needed for a house if he were not a specialist, but anyone might cut poles and stringers used in the roof construction.

313 Woods used in house construction are pine and
137 fir. Pine is most used and two types are distinguished, red (iaríni), the heartwood of large trees, and white, the sapwood of large trees or wood from young trees. From these woods are made shakes, *tejamanil*, "*vigas*" (any piece over 2 inches (5 cm.) in thickness), and planks, or *tablas*.[1]

313 Trees are felled and trimmed with the ax. To
412 cut trees in sections, a two-handled saw is used called a "*sardina*." Splitting is done with oak wedges and an oak maul. Large pieces produced in this fashion are sometimes dressed down with ax or adze. Planks, or *tablas*, are sawed with a long two-handled saw (k'eréri aráakutarakua). Logs destined for planks are squared with the ax, marked

[1] The measure of length is the *vara*, which is divided in fourths or thirds. Each fourth contains eight English inches (20 cm.); so the *vara* equals 32 inches, or 81.25 cm. Fourths and inches are measured usually with the hand and fingers, but the span is also used.

4: West K-5 (1946) 1948 NU34 Tarasco NU34
[P. 55b] Sierra

313 ing is carried on outside the Sierra. Some beams and planks are cut by the people of Zipiajo and Teremendo, who have large tracts of forest on the slopes of El Zirate, and some farmers of the Lake area and La Cañada cut small amounts of lumber for home use.

313 423 Beals' discussion (1946, pp. 15–19) of legal cutting rights, lumber products, and lumber tools for Cherán can be applied to most of the present Sierra pueblos; therefore, only a summary will be given here. As mentioned above, all Sierra pueblos possess varying amounts of forest land held as common property. Since the late [656] 1930's the Federal Government has attempted to control exploitation by placing all large forest areas under national domain, by encouraging the organization of local lumbering cooperatives, and by periodically inspecting lumbering activities. [651] In most pueblos the Federal tax on lumber products is passed on to the individual woodsmen, who pay the town council a given amount for cutting rights. In other towns lumber cooperatives [474] have been formed to pay the tax, each member contributing dues and having sole cutting rights in the village forest lands.

Although much lumber is for local use (house construction, fences, acqueducts, watering troughs, [439] shakes, etc.), most is cut for the outside market. Raw logs, beams (*vigas*), planks (*vigetas*, *tablas*), and railroad ties of pine and fir are cut and prepared for lumber contractors, whose heavy trucks [493] visit the larger villages during the dry season to [492] haul the products to the nearest railhead. Woodcutters of the remote pueblos drag beams and planks to market with the aid of burros and mules. [497] Los Reyes, Tingüindín, Tangamandapio, and Zamora handle the forest products from the western part of the Sierra, while Uruapan, Zacapu, Ajuno Station, and Pátzcuaro serve as lumber points for the eastern section. Formerly a significant forest industry, shake making (performed by skilled specialists) is slowly declining because of the increasing use of tile roofing.[128] Turpentine 314 is no longer distilled locally. (See Beals, 1946, p. 18, for illustration of Tarascan still.) Rather, the resin (*resina*) is gathered in 5-gallon tins and taken to the village, where they are periodically

[128] Although in some pueblos (Paracho and Nahuatzen, Angahuan, Capacuaro) shakes are still made for export to Uruapan, most are used locally. During colonial times and even in the last century large quantities of shakes were shipped from the Sierra to the northern mines, where they were the principal roofing material.